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HUMAN EVENTS
12 October 1985

Inside Washington

Have Soviets Penetrated CIA?

John Barron, the author of two books on the Soviet KGB, said last week that the recent defections of three Soviet intelligence officials have dealt a major blow to the Soviet intelligence apparatus.

But the defection of one of the Soviets, a high-ranking KGB officer, Vitaly Yurchenko, has raised questions as to whether the CIA has been penetrated by the Soviets. One former CIA employee has reportedly been named by Yurchenko as a Soviet "mole" and has apparently fled the United States. However, there are differing accounts as to what rank the employee held and when he allegedly began supplying information to the Soviets.

Barron said he would be surprised to learn that the CIA has been penetrated at a high level. "The CIA has been able to conduct very high-level clandestine operations over a protracted period [against the Soviets]," he said. "And if there were penetration at a really significant level, it seems to me the Soviets would have learned about these operations and would have interdicted them."

On the other hand, Barron added, "I don't know anybody in the intelligence world who precludes the possibility that, at one time or another, a hostile service will succeed. Former CIA directors say they can never preclude that possibility."

Barron said the recent defection by the KGB station chief in London, Oleg Gordievski, who had been secretly working for the West since 1972, indicates that the KGB is an easier target for penetration than the CIA.

The defection by Gordievski resulted in the decision by the British government to expel 31 Soviet diplomats, journalists and trade representatives as intelligence operatives.

According to Washington *Times* Editor-in-Chief Arnaud de Borchgrave, who traveled to London to report on the defection, Gordievski has actually named more than 100 Britons and other foreigners in Britain as Soviet agents.

De Borchgrave reported, "The names of the Britons who had been witting or unwitting agents for the Soviet intelligence agency are being kept

secret by the British government, trying to minimize its acute embarrassment. It was learned the compromised agents include politicians — not just the left — and trade unionists as well as members of the peace movement."

The other Soviet defector was a senior official of Soviet military intelligence, the GRU, by the name of Sergei Bokhan, who was based in Greece. New York *Times* reporter Paul Anastasi, who has himself written a book on Soviet penetration of Greek society, quoted sources as saying that Bokhan is providing the CIA with "information on how Moscow obtained military-oriented Western technology through Greece, on the manipulation of the Greek press to foster anti-Western sentiment and on Soviet support for some terrorist activities in the West."

Although a Greek naval officer and two businessmen have been arrested as a result of Bokhan's revelations, the pro-Soviet Greek government of Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu has tried to downplay charges that the Soviets have extensively infiltrated Greek society.

Moreover, Anastasi reported, after the defection, the Greek government complied with Soviet demands to turn over Bokhan's wife and seven-year-old daughter, rather than give them an opportunity to join him in Washington.

Barron said he believes the three Soviets defected for idealistic, not materialistic, reasons, that they became disillusioned with the "degeneration and corruption of Soviet society that is being spread to the Soviet clandestine apparatus."

He said that when he interviewed KGB defector Stanislav Levchenko several years ago, "he predicted developments such as these...he had seen the spread of corruption in the KGB."